

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 04789 172158Z

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 NRC-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 FEA-01 EB-07 OES-05

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R 171950Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1919

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY BONN

US MISSION IAEA VIENNA 108

US MISSION EC BRUSSELS 203

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 4789

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, TECH, AR

SUBJ: REACTION TO NEWSWEEK ARTICLE ON ADEQUACY OF SAFEGUARDS

REF: STATE 158043 (NOTAL)

1. "LA OPINION" OF JULY 11 CARRIED ARTICLE WHICH APPEARS TO BE INDIRECTLY DESCENDED IN SOME WAY FROM NEWSWEEK ARTICLE, WHICH, HOWEVER, NEVER CITED.

2. ARTICLE REFERS TO A SUPPOSED STATEMENT OF SENATOR RIBICOFF TO EFFECT THAT ARGENTIA HAD GIVEN AWAY (DESPRENDIDO) ENOUGH PLUTONIUM TO MAKE FIVE (5) A-BOMBS. "LOCAL SOURCES" IDENTIFIED LIBYA AS THE RECEIPT OF THE MATERIAL.

3. OFFICIALS SOURCES, BOTH IN CNEA AND THE ARMED FORCES, DISCOUNTED THE REPORT, ACCORDING TO THE PAPER.

4. WITH RESPECT TO THE U.S. REPORT AHT THE PLUTONIUM CAME FROM UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 04789 172158Z

ATUCHA (NEWSWEEK), "AUTHORIZED SCIENTIFIC CIRCLES" HERE

EXPLAINED THAT ARGENTINA POSSESSES 150 KG. OF PU AS RESIDUE FROM BURNED ATUCHA FUEL AND THAT, OF THIS TOTAL, ONLY 1KG. HAD BEEN SEPARATED AND HALF OF THIS WAS SOLD TO THE FRG UNDER INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS.

5. THE ARTICLE STATES THAT AN IAEA DELEGATION WAS PRESENTLY VISITING ATUCHA TO MAKE A ROUTINE INSPECTION AND COULD EASILY HAVE DETECTED THE CLAIMED EXTRACTION OF PLUTONIUM.

6. THE ARTICLE STATES THAT COUNTRIES WHICH USE PLUTONIUM FOR ATOMIC BOMBS OBTAIN IT FROM PLUTONIUM (PRODUCTION) REACTORS, WHICH COST ONLY A 3RD OR 4TH AS MUCH AS A POWER REACTOR, HENCE, IT MAKES NO SENSE TO USE AN EXPENSIVE POWER REACTOR TO PRODUCE MILITARY PLUTONIUM.

7. WHILE ARGENTINA IS A LARGE PRODUCER OF URANIUM, ARTICLE STATES, AND COULD EXPORT PLUTONIUM (SIC), MOST COUNTRIES INTERESTED IN ACQUIRING IT LACK THE NECESSARY TECHNOLOGY TO TRANSFORM IT TO MILITARY USE, AND THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE OF LIBYA.

8. COMMENT: EMBASSY TENDS TO DISCOUNT MOST OF WHAT THIS ARTICLE STATES AS IT IS FULL OF OBVIOUS INACCURACIES. IT IS ONLY PRESS REACTION RELATED TO NEWSWEEK ARTICLE WE HAVE SEEN, HOWEVER, IN THIS PERIOD OF DOMESTIC TURMOIL IN ARGENTINA.
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Message Attributes

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